

Purpose and Charge:

According to Chapter 251 of the Acts of 2014, Section 7(a)-(b)

“There shall be a net metering task force established to review the long-term viability of net metering and develop recommendations on incentives and programs to support the deployment of 1600 MW of solar generation facilities in the commonwealth. The task force shall report on its findings and make recommendations to the general court to encourage the continued expansion of solar generation in the commonwealth.”

“The task force shall assess and report to the legislature on the costs and benefits of the existing net metering framework from the perspectives of the customer-generator, non-participating ratepayers and the citizens of the commonwealth at large. The task force shall review incentive programs offered in other states, including standard offer, declining block incentives and competitive procurements and shall also include in its findings an analysis on the impact of a minimum bill, paid by all ratepayers in all rate classes, as a mechanism to support a reliable electric distribution system. The task force shall meet periodically and shall consult with additional electric distribution companies, consumer organizations, renewable energy businesses residing in the commonwealth and other interested parties as required and shall provide for at least 2 opportunities for public comment in different geographical areas of the commonwealth.”

I. PARTICIPATION RULES:

1. Each appointee on the Task Force can designate an alternate (drawn from the appointee’s own organization) to speak on behalf of the appointee when the appointee is unable to attend Task Force Meetings. Alternates must be designated in writing which shall be provided to the Co-Chairs provided before meeting.
2. Only the appointee will have a seat at the inner table and participate in any formal deliberations (negotiation and recommendation decisions).
3. Task Force appointees can participate in all discussions and deliberations. Alternates will also be able to participate in discussions and formal deliberations at times designated by the Co-Chairs.
4. Other attendees, who are not appointees or alternates, will also be given a chance to express their opinions and make suggestions at appropriate junctures, as time allows and as determined by the Co-Chairs.
5. Subcommittee participation will be similarly structured as that of Task Force.
6. The Co-Chairs will moderate at least two opportunities for public comment.

II. MEMBERSHIP ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Task Force and Subcommittee appointees and alternates will make every attempt to attend all applicable meetings, to be on-time, and to review all documents disseminated prior to the meeting.
2. If an appointee or his/her alternate cannot attend a meeting, the appointee will let the Co-Chairs know prior to the meeting (by telephone or e-mail).
3. Appointees, alternates, and other participants are charged with participating in a constructive forum where diverse points of view are voiced and examined in a professional and balanced way. Personal attacks are not permitted.
4. All appointees and alternates agree to act in good faith in the discussions. 'Good faith' means that they will be forthright and communicative about the interests and preferences of their organization and will actively seek agreement wherever possible.
5. It is the responsibility of the appointees and alternates to keep their organizations and stakeholders aligned with their organizations informed of developments in the Task Force process.
6. The Co-Chairs will set and enforce appropriate time limits for participation and topics to ensure that all parties have sufficient opportunity to state their views.
7. The Co-Chairs may designate subcommittees on specific topics. These subcommittees will be charged with bringing suggestions, ideas, and perhaps draft products back to the Task Force for discussion. Such subcommittees will work under the direction of the Task Force, and will not act or make decisions on its behalf.
8. Appointees and alternates shall be familiar with the rules and regulations of the Open Meeting Law (G.L. c.30A, §19(a)).
9. Appointees and alternates may confer with each other during meeting breaks and in between meetings, and are encouraged to do so, keeping in mind the Open Meeting Law
10. Appointees and alternates are not permitted to quote or otherwise represent other members of the working group process to the press or other outside entities (including in blogs), or to speak on behalf of the Task Force (or Subcommittees) unless so designated by the Co-Chairs.
11. The Co-Chairs' will help design and manage productive and well-informed meetings. The Co-Chairs will also be responsible for recording points of agreement and disagreement.
12. The Co-Chairs will impartially, and in a non-partisan manner, (not favoring any appointee, alternate, or organization over another), facilitate all meetings of the Task Force and subcommittees.

13. The Co-Chairs will prepare draft agendas and meeting summaries in a timely fashion for distribution to the members.
14. All documents will be posted on a web site maintained by either the DOER or DPU for the duration of the process, and the Co-Chairs will provide email notice when new documents are posted on the website.
15. The Co-Chairs will take the lead in assembling the Final Report to the legislature on the Task Force's behalf, and with their review and sign-off.
16. The Co-Chairs shall compile minutes of each Task Force and subcommittee meeting that include the names of all members present no later than two weeks after the meeting and shall be in compliance with all applicable open meetings laws and public record laws.
17. Task Force members are free to talk with other appointees and alternates outside the regularly scheduled meeting as they deem appropriate, and appointees and alternates are free to discuss pertinent matters with the Co-Chairs if and when the need arises. Task Force members shall do so in accordance with open meeting laws and public record laws.

III. REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS & DECISION MAKING

1. The goal of the process is to make substantive recommendations by the majority of the Task Force members (organizations).
2. If unable to consent, an appointee will be expected to explain the reason for dissenting and to try and offer an alternative. Appointees are responsible for voicing their objections and concerns.
3. The Task Force's Final Report to the legislature at the end of the process will identify all areas of agreement, and will provide a description of the alternative approaches preferred by members if and where the Task Force is split on what to recommend.
4. Where multiple options are offered, Task Force members supporting alternative approaches will ascribe their organizations' names to their preferred alternative.
5. Task Force member organizations (and any other organization that adds its name to the Final Report—i.e., a signatory organization) can provide supporting information and supplemental comments to the Co-Chairs and the legislature within the timeframe and format (e.g., page limit) specified by the Co-Chairs and consistent with State Administrative Procedure law (G.L. c. 30A), as long as such information and comments are not inconsistent with the positions taken by that member organization (or any other signatory organization) within the report.

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